A BRIEF

NARRATIVE

OF THE

REVIVAL OF RELIGION

IN

Virginia.

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In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. Ps. cxi. 2.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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A BRIEF

NARRATIVE, &c.

Dear Sir,

YOU was pleaſed, when in *Virginia*, to deſire a Narrative of the Work of God in theſe parts. I ſhall give you matter of fact, in a plain, artleſs dreſs, relating only what I have myſelf ſeen and heard, and what I have received from men on whoſe Judgment and Veracity I can fully depend.

That you may have a full view of the whole, I ſhall go back as far as my firſt ſettlement in this Pariſh. Auguſt 29, 1763, I was choſen Rector of *Bath*, in the County of *Dinwiddie*, in *Virginia*. Ignorance of the things of God, Prophaneneſs, and Irreligion then prevailed among all ranks and degrees. So that I doubt if even the form of Godlineſs was to be found, in any one family of this large and populous

Parish. I was a stranger to the people: My doctrines were quite new to them: and were neither preached nor believed by any other clergyman, so far as I could learn, throughout the Province.

My first work was, to explain the Depravity of our Nature: our Fall in Adam, and all the evils consequent thereon; the impossibility of being delivered from them by any thing which we could do, and the necessity of a living Faith, in order to our obtaining help from God. While I continued to insist upon these truths, and on the absolute necessity of being born again, no small outcry was raised against this way, as well as against him that taught it. But by the help of God, I continued to witness the same both to small and great.

The common people, however, frequented the Church more constantly, and in larger numbers than usual. Some were affected at times, so as to drop a tear. But still for a year or more, I perceived no lasting effect, only a few were not altogether so profane as before. I could discover no heart-felt convictions of Sin, no deep or lasting impression of their lost estate. Indeed I have reason to believe that some have been a good deal alarmed at times. But they were shy of speaking to me, (thinking it would be presumption) till their convictions wore off.

But in the year 1765, the power of God was more sensibly felt by a few. These were constrained to apply to me, and enquire, "What they must do to be saved?" And now I began to preach abroad, as well

well as in private Houſes; and to meet little companies in the Evenings, and converſe freely on divine things. I believe ſome were this year converted to God, and thenceforth the work of God ſlowly went on.

The next year I became acquainted with Mr. *M'Robert*, Rector of a neighbouring Pariſh: And we joined hand in hand in the great work. He laboured much therein; and not in vain. A remarkable power attended his Preaching, and many were truly converted to God, not only in his Pariſh, but in other parts, where he was called to labour.

In the years 1770 and 1771, we had a more conſiderable out-pouring of the Spirit, at a place in my Pariſh called *White-Oak*. It was here firſt I formed the people into a Society, that they might aſſiſt and ſtrengthen each other. The good effects of this were ſoon apparent. Convictions were deep and laſting: And not only Knowledge, but Faith, and Love, and Holineſs continually increaſed.

In the year 1772, the Revival was more conſiderable, and extended itſelf in ſome places, for fifty or ſixty miles round. It increaſed ſtill more in the following year, and ſeveral ſinners were truly converted to God. In Spring, 1774, it was more remarkable than ever. The word preached was attended with ſuch energy, that many were pierced to the heart. Tears fell plentifully from the eyes of the Hearers, and ſome were conſtrained to cry out. A goodly number were gathered in this year, both

in my Pariſh, and in many of the neighbouring counties. I formed ſeveral Societies out of thoſe which were convinced or converted; and I found it an happy means of building up thoſe that had believed, and preventing the reſt from loſing their convictions.

In the Counties of *Suſſex* and *Brunſwick*, the work from the year 1773, was chiefly carried on by the labours of the people called *Methodiſts*. The firſt of them who appeared in theſe was Mr. *Robert Williams*, who, you know, was a plain, artleſs, indefatigable Preacher of the Goſpel: He was greatly bleſt in detecting the hypocrite, raſing falſe foundations, and ſtirring believers up to preſs after a preſent Salvation from the remains of ſin. He came to my houſe in the month of March, in the year 1773. The next year others of his Brethren came, who gathered many Societies, both in this neighbourhood, and in other places, as far as *North Carolina*. They now began to ride the Circuit, and to take care of the Societies already formed, which was rendered an happy means both of deepening and ſpreading the Work of God.

I earneſtly recommended it to my Societies, to pray much for the proſperity of Sion, and for a larger out-pouring of the Spirit of God. They did ſo; and not in vain. We have had a time of refreſhing indeed: a Revival of Religion, as great as perhaps ever was known, in country places, in ſo ſhort a time. It began in the latter end of the year 1775: but was more conſiderable in January, 1776, the beginning of the preſent year. It broke out nearly

nearly at the ſame time, at three places, not far from each other. Two of theſe places are in my pariſh; the other, in *Amelia* County, had for many years been notorious for careleſſneſs, profaneneſs, and immoralities of all kinds. Gaming, Swearing, Drunkenneſs, and the like were their Delight, while things ſacred were their ſcorn and contempt. However ſome time laſt year, one of my Pariſh (now a Local Preacher) appointed ſome Meetings among them, and after a while, induced a ſmall number to join in Society. And though few, if any of them were then Believers, yet this was a means of preparing the way of the Lord.

As there were few Converts in my Pariſh the laſt year, I was ſenſible a change of Preachers was wanting. This has often revived the work of God: and ſo it did at the preſent time. Laſt December, one of the Methodiſt Preachers, Mr. *Shadford*, preached ſeveral times at the three places abovementioned. He confirmed the Doctrine I had long preached: and to many of them not in vain. And while their ears were opened by novelty, God ſet his word home upon their hearts. Many ſinners were powerfully convinced, and Mercy! Mercy! was their cry. In January, the news of Convictions and Converſions were common; and the people of God were inſpired with new life and vigor, by the happineſs of others. But in a little time they were made throughly ſenſible, that they themſelves ſtood in need of a deeper work in their hearts, than they had yet experienced. And while thoſe were panting

and

and groaning for pardon, these were intreating God with strong cries and tears, to save them from the remains of inbred sin, to *sanctify them throughout, in spirit, soul, and body*; so *to circumcise their hearts*, that they might *love God with all their hearts*, and serve him *with all their strength*.

During this whole winter, the spirit of the Lord was poured out in a manner we had not seen before. In almost every Assembly might be seen signal instances of Divine Power; more especially in the meetings of the Classes. Here, many old, stout-hearted sinners, felt the force of Truth, and their eyes were opened to discover their guilt and danger. The shaking among the dry bones was increased from week to week: nay, sometimes ten or twelve have been deeply convinced of sin in one day. Some of these were in great distress, and when they were questioned concerning the state of their souls, were scarce able to make any reply, but by weeping and falling on their knees, before all the Class, and earnestly soliciting the Prayers of God's people. And from time to time he has answered these petitions, set the captives at liberty, and enabled them to praise a pardoning God, in the midst of his people. Numbers of old and grey-headed, of middle-aged persons, of youth, yea of little children, were the subjects of this work. Several of the latter we have seen painfully concerned for the wickedness of their lives, and the corruption of their nature. We have instances of this sort, from eight or nine years old. Some of these Children are exceeding

ceeding happy in the Love of God: and they ſpeak of the whole proceſs of the work of God, of their Convictions, the time when, and the manner how they obtained deliverance, with ſuch clearneſs as might convince an Atheiſt, that this is nothing elſe but the great Power of God.

Many in theſe parts who had long neglected the means of grace, now flocked to hear, not only me, and the travelling Preachers, but alſo the Exhorters, and Leaders. And the Lord ſhewed, he is not confined to man: for whether there was preaching, or not, his power was ſtill ſenſible among the people. And at their meetings for Prayer, ſome have been in ſuch diſtreſs, that they have continued therein for five or ſix hours. And it has been found that theſe Prayer-Meetings were ſingularly uſeful in promoting the Work of God.

The out-pouring of the Spirit which began here, ſoon extended itſelf more or leſs, thro' moſt of the Circuit, which is regularly attended by the travelling Preachers, and which takes in a circumference of between four and five hundred miles. And the work went on with a pleaſing progreſs, till the beginning of May; when they held a Quarterly Meeting at *Boiſſeau*'s Chapel, in my Pariſh. This ſtands at the lower line of the Pariſh, thirty miles from *White*'s Chapel, at the upper line of it, where the work began. At this meeting, one might truly ſay, the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain of Divine Influence poured down for more than forty days. The work now became

more

more deep than ever, extended wider, and was ſwifter in its operations. Many were ſavingly converted to God, and in a very ſhort time, not only in my Pariſh, but thro' ſeveral parts of *Brunſwick*, *Suſſex*, *Prince George*, *Lunenburg*, *Mecklenburg*, and *Amelia* Counties.

The ſecond day of the Quarterly Meeting, a Love-feaſt was held. As ſoon as it began, the power of the Lord came down on the Aſſembly, like a ruſhing, mighty wind; and it ſeemed as if the whole houſe was filled with the preſence of God. A flame kindled and ran from heart to heart. Many were deeply convinced of ſin: many mourners were filled with conſolation: and many believers were ſo overwhelmed with Love, that they could not doubt but God had enabled them to love him with *all* their heart.

When the Love-feaſt was ended, the doors were opened. Many who had ſtayed without, then came in: and beholding the anguiſh of ſome, and the rejoicing of others, were filled with aſtoniſhment; and not long after, with trembling apprehenſions of their own danger. Several of them proſtrating themſelves before God, cried aloud for mercy. And the convictions which then began in many, have terminated in a happy and laſting Change.

The multitudes that attended on this occaſion, returning home all alive to God, ſpread the flame through their reſpective neighbourhoods, which ran from family to family. So that within four weeks,

ſeveral

ſeveral hundreds found the peace of God. And ſcarce any converſation was to be heard throughout the Circuit, but concerning the things of God: either the complainings of the priſoners, groaning under the ſpirit of bondage unto fear: or the rejoicing of thoſe whom the Spirit of adoption taught to cry, "Abba Father." The unhappy diſputes between *England* and her Colonies, which juſt before had ingroſſed all our converſation, ſeemed now in moſt companies to be forgot, while things of far greater importance lay ſo near the heart. I have gone into many, and not ſmall companies, wherein there did not appear to be one careleſs ſoul: and the far greater part ſeemed perfectly happy in a clear ſenſe of the Love of God.

One of the Doctrines, as you know, which we particularly inſiſt upon, is that of a preſent Salvation; a Salvation not only from the Guilt and Power, but alſo from the Root of Sin: A *cleanſing from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, that we may perfect holineſs in the fear of God: a going on to perfection*; which we ſometimes define, by *loving God with all our hearts.* Several who had believed were deeply ſenſible of their want of this. I have ſeen both men and women, who had long been happy in a ſenſe of God's pardoning Love; as much convicted on account of ſin remaining in their hearts, and as much diſtreſt for a total deliverance from them, as ever I ſaw any for Juſtification. Their whole cry was,

"O that

" O that I now the Reſt might know;
Believe and enter in!
Now, Saviour, now, the power beſtow,
And let me ceaſe from ſin!"

And I have been preſent, when they believed that God anſwered this prayer, and beſtowed this bleſſing upon them. I have converſed with them ſeveral times ſince, and have found them throughly devoted to God. They all teſtify that they have received the Gift inſtantaneouſly, and by ſimple Faith. We have ſundry witneſſes of this perfect Love, who are above all ſuſpicion. I have known the men and their communication for many years, and have ever found them zealous for the cauſe of God: Men of Senſe and Integrity, Patterns of Piety and Humility; whoſe teſtimony therefore may be depended upon.

It has been frequently obſerved, that there never was any remarkable Revival of Religion, but ſome degree of Enthuſiaſm was mingled with it; ſome Wild-fire mixed with the ſacred flame. It may be doubted, whether this is not unavoidable in the nature of things. And notwithſtanding all the care we have taken, this work has not been quite free from it. But it never roſe to any conſiderable height, neither was of long continuance. In ſome Meetings there have not been that Decency and Order obſerved, which I could have wiſhed. Some of our Aſſemblies reſembled the Congregation of the Jews at laying the foundation of the Second Temple in the days of *Ezra*. Some wept for grief; others ſhouted for joy, ſo that it was hard to diſtinguiſh one

one from the other. So it was here. The mourning and diſtreſs was ſo blended with the voice of joy and gladneſs, that it was hard to diſtinguiſh the one from the other, till the voice of Joy prevailed: the people ſhouting with a great ſhout, ſo that it might be heard afar off.

To give you a fuller inſight into this great work of God, I ſubjoin an Extract from two or three of my Letters.

To the Rev. Mr. *M'Robert.*

Dinwiddie, *May* 2, 1776.

Rev. and dear Brother,

YESTERDAY I preached at *Boiſſeau's* Chapel, to a crouded and attentive Audience. Afterwards the *Methodiſts* held their Love-feaſt: during which, as many as pleaſed, roſe one after another, and ſpoke, in few words, of the Goodneſs of God to their ſouls. Before three had done ſpeaking, (altho' they ſpoke but few words) you might ſee a ſolemn ſenſe of the preſence of God, viſible on every Countenance, while tears of ſorrow or joy were flowing from many eyes. Several teſtified the conſolation they had received: ſome believed they were perfected in love. When the paſſions of the people were riſing too high, and breaking thro' all reſtraint, the Preacher gently checked them, by

giving out a few verſes of an hymn. When moſt of the Congregation went away, ſome were ſo diſtreſt with a ſenſe of their ſins, that they could not be perſuaded to leave the place. Some lively Chriſtians ſtayed with them, and continued in prayer for the ſpace of two hours, till fifteen mourners were enabled to rejoice in God their Saviour. And ſome careleſs Creatures of the politer ſort, who would needs go in, to ſee what this ſtrange thing meant, felt an unuſual power, ſo that like *Saul* among the Prophets, they fell down on their knees, and cried for mercy among the reſt. O may they ſtill continue to pray, till God has given them another heart.

May 3. 1776.

Laſt night, three or four ſcore of my neighbours met together to keep a Watch-night: at which it is the cuſtom to ſpend three or four hours in Religious Exerciſes, and to break up about twelve o'clock. But inſtead of breaking up at twelve, ſuch was the diſtreſs of thoſe that were convinced of ſin, that they continued in prayer all night, and till two hours after ſun-riſe. Here alſo fourteen or fifteen received a ſenſe of pardon. So that in two days thirty of my own Pariſh have been juſtified, beſides others, of other Pariſhes.

Indeed I don't take it for granted that all are juſtified who think they are ſo. Some, I fear are miſtaken. But I ſhall judge better of this, when I ſee the fruits.

The

May 7. 1776.

The work of God ſtill increaſes among us: I believe, within theſe eight days, more than forty here have been filled with joy and peace in believing. Of theſe I have had an account, but there may be many more. And ſeveral who have been juſtified ſome time, believe God has bleſt them with perfect love.

I have no doubt, but the work now carrying on, is genuine: yet there were ſome circumſtances attending it, which I diſliked: ſuch as loud outcries, tremblings, fallings, convulſions. But I am better reconciled, ſince I read Preſident *Edwards* on the head, who obſerves, that wherever theſe moſt appeared, there was always the greateſt and the deepeſt work.

There is another thing which has given me much pain; The praying of ſeveral at one and the ſame time. Sometimes five or ſix, or more have been praying all at once in ſeveral parts of the room for diſtreſt perſons. Others were ſpeaking by way of Exhortation, ſo that the Aſſembly appeared to be all in confuſion, and muſt ſeem to one at a little diſtance, more like a drunken rabble, than the worſhippers of God. I was afraid, this was not doing *all things in decency and order*. Indeed Dr. *Edwards* defends this alſo. But yet I am not ſatisfied concerning it. I had heard of it, but never ſaw it till Sunday Evening. But this is a delicate point. It requires much wiſdom, to allay the wild, and not damp the ſacred fire.

The firſt appearance of any thing of the kind at my Chapel, was laſt Saturday night. I was not there, but a young man who ſtudies at my houſe was. He is grave, prudent, and ſolidly religious, without the leaſt tincture of Enthuſiaſm. He met the Society there in the Afternoon, and would have returned home; but that many who were in great diſtreſs, begged him and ſome others to ſtay and pray with them. They continued in prayer the whole night, during which about twelve were ſet at Liberty. But notwithſtanding all they could do, there were often two, three, or more, ſpeaking at one time.

I heard of this the next day, when I was at Church, and haſtened thence to the Chapel. Some hundreds were aſſembled there, and were in much confuſion when I went in. I went into the Pulpit, and began to ſing, adding ſhort Exhortations and Prayers. The confuſion ceaſed: Several ſpirits were revived, and ſome Mourners comforted.

Since that Evening, this kind of Confuſion has never been known in my neighbourhood. It continued longer in other places: but for ſome time has been totally gone. But as this abated, the work of Conviction and Converſion uſually abated too. Yet, bleſſed be God, it ſtill goes on, though not with ſuch rapidity. I have heard but of two or three that found peace for three weeks: Whereas ſome time ago, ſeldom a week paſt, but I could hear of eight or nine; ſometimes between twenty and thirty at one meeting.

I have

I have chiefly ſpoken of what was done in my Pariſh. But that you may know a little of what was done elſewhere, I ſubjoin an Extract from the Letters of two local Preachers, in the County of *Suſſex*.

July 29. 1776.

Rev. Sir,

WITH unſpeakable pleaſure I acquaint you of the glorious Revival of Religion in our parts. It broke out at our laſt Quarterly Meeting, and has ſince wonderfully ſpread throughout the Circuit. The time ſeems to be coming, when we ſhall not need to teach every man his neighbour to know the Lord: for they daily *know him from the leaſt to the greateſt*, from little children to men of fourſcore. Above ſeven years have I been exhorting my neighbours; but very few would hear. Now, bleſſed be God, there are few that will not hear. It is no ſtrange thing for two or three to find the Lord at a Claſs-meeting: And at a Sunday meeting, although there was no Preacher, ten, fifteen, yea, near twenty have been converted. At a place near me, thirty have found the Lord, within eight days. It is common with us, for men and women to fall down as dead under an Exhortation; but many more under Prayer: perhaps twenty at a time. And ſome that have not fallen to the earth, have ſhewn the ſame diſtreſs, wringing their hands, ſmiting their breaſts, and begging all to pray for

them. With these the work is generally quick; some getting thro' in less than a week, some in two or three days, some in one, two, or three hours. Nay, we have an instance of one that was so indifferent, as to leave her brethren at prayers, and go to bed. But all at once she screamed out, under a sense of her lost estate, and in less than fifteen minutes rejoiced in God her Saviour. And, blessed be God, many of these retain a sense of his favor. Many, who a few weeks ago were despisers and scoffers, are now happy in the Lord. Many old Christians, who were always full of doubts and fears, now walk in the light of his countenance. Some have a clear witness in themselves, that they have given their whole hearts to God. O may God carry on his work among us, until we are all swallowed up in love!"

THOMAS SAUNDERS.

Mr. *Saunders* lives two and twenty miles from me: The writer of the following Letter, about thirty.

July 29. 1776.

Rev. Sir,

ON *June* the 9th, we had a large congregation. I spoke on, *No man can serve two masters.* Several appeared to be much distressed, two women in particular. We spent above an hour in prayer for them, and they arose in peace. When we met the Class, we suffered all that desired it, to stay.

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The Leader only put a queſtion or two to each member. This was ſcarce ended, when the fire of God's love was kindled. Praiſes hung on the lips of many. And many cried out, "*What muſt we do to be ſaved?*" Thus it ſwiftly went on; every new and then one riſing with faith in Jeſus. Surely this was one of the days of heaven! Such a day I never expected to ſee in Time. While we were met, one *Iſham Whitehead* was obſerved to be looking through the crack of the door. The door being opened, he came with it, and being unable to ſtand, fell on the floor quite helpleſs. But in two or three hours he roſe and praiſed a pardoning God: While one of the Claſs, who had been juſtified ſome time, received a Bleſſing greatly ſuperior to any thing he had known before. We have reaſon to believe, that on this day, fifteen were enabled to believe in Jeſus.

Saturday, June 15. I was ſpeaking to the Claſs, and one found peace to her ſoul. Sunday, 16. I ſpoke from, *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*, to four or five hundred people. This was alſo a day of Pentecoſt. Convictions ſeized on numbers, who wreſtled with God, till their ſouls were ſet at liberty. A young woman told me "She heard, many people fell down, and ſhe would come, to help them up." This ſhe ſaid in ſcorn. She came accordingly. The power of God ſoon ſeized her, and ſhe wanted helping up herſelf. But it was not long before he helped her, by giving her faith in Chriſt. We believe twenty ſouls found peace this day. O may we ſee many ſuch days!

July,

July, 7. I ſpoke to a large Congregation. Afterwards I was going to give out an hymn, when one was ſo powerfully ſtruck, that he could not hold a joint ſtill, and roared aloud for mercy. I immediately went to prayer: The cries of the people meantime greatly increaſing. After prayer, *Benjamin Tyus*, late a great oppoſer, jumped up, and began to praiſe God, with a countenance ſo altered, that thoſe who beheld him were filled with aſtoniſhment. Our meeting continued from twelve at noon, till twelve at night, during which, God raiſed up about fifteen more witneſſes.

The Thurſday following, ſix of thoſe who were convinced on Sunday, found peace in believing. We hear of many others converted in the neighbourhood, ſeveral of whom were ſtrong Oppoſers: And ſome hoary-headed ones, who had been ſtrict Phariſees from their youth up.

Sunday, 21. We had a large and attentive Auditory, and the power of the Lord prevailed. The next day I was much tempted to doubt, whether I was ſent of God to preach or not? I prayed earneſtly to the Lord, that he would ſatisfy me, and that he would keep all falſe fire from among us. Afterwards I preached. While I was ſpeaking, a Mother and her Daughter were ſo ſtruck, that they trembled every joint: But before I concluded, both found peace. Glory be to God!

I am, &c.

JOHN DICKINS.

God

God has made Examples of ſeveral Oppoſers—Examples not of Juſtice, but of Mercy. Some of them came to the Aſſembly with hearts full of rancor againſt the people of God, ſo that had it been in their power, they would have dragged them away, to priſon, if not to death. But unexpectedly their ſtubborn hearts were bowed down, being pierced with the arrows of the Almighty. In a moment they were filled with diſtreſs and anguiſh, their laughter turned into mourning, and their Curſing into Prayer. And frequently in leſs than a week, their heavineſs has been turned into joy. Of this ſort are ſeveral of our moſt zealous and circumſpect walkers at this day. A goodly number of theſe are rich in this world: yet they are now brought ſo low, that they are willing to be taught by all, and to be the ſervants of all.

A Gentleman of this Pariſh, in particular, had much oppoſed and contradicted: He was fully perſuaded, that all outward appearances, either of diſtreſs or joy, were mere deceit. But as he was walking to his Mill, about half a mile from his Houſe, deep Conviction fell upon him. The terrors of the Lord beſet him round about, and diſtreſs and anguiſh got hold upon him. When he came to the Mill and found no one there, he took that opportunity of proſtrating himſelf before God, and pouring out his ſoul in his preſence. As his diſtreſs was great, his cries were loud, and his prayer importunate. The Lord heard him, and ſet his ſoul at liberty before he left the place. And the power which came upon him

him was so great, that it seemed as if his whole frame were dissolving.

Upon the whole, this has been a great, a deep, a swift, and an extensively glorious Work. Both the nature and manner of it have been nearly the same, wherever it's benign influence reached. Where the greatest work was, where the greatest number of souls have been convinced and converted to God, there have been the most outcries, tremblings, convulsions, and all sorts of external signs. I took all the pains I could, that these might be kept within bounds, that our good might not be evil spoken of. This I did, not by openly inveighing against them in the public assembly; but by private Advices to Local Preachers and others, as opportunity would permit. This method had its desired effect, without putting a sword into the hands of the wicked. Wherever the contrary method has been taken, where these things have been publickly opposed, when they have been spoken against in promiscuous Congregations, the effect has always been this: The men of the world have been highly gratified, and the children of God deeply wounded. The former have plumed themselves, as tho' they were the men who kept within due bounds, and those that had "made so much ado about Religion," were no better than hot-brained Enthusiasts. I cannot but think this has a great tendency to hinder the work of God. Indeed if we thought, that God wrought every thing irresistibly, we should not fear this. But we know the contrary: we know, that as some things promote, so others hinder his work. I grant,

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Means ſhould be uſed to prevent all indecency: but they ſhould be uſed with great caution and tenderneſs, that the cure may be effected, if poſſible, without damping the work of God.

With regard to the Inward Work, there has been a great variety as to the length, and depth, and circumſtances of the Convictions in different perſons; but all in general have been at firſt alarmed with a ſenſe of the multitude and heinouſneſs of their ſins, with an awful view of the wrath of God, and certain deſtruction, if they perſiſted therein. Hence they betook themſelves to Prayer, and as time permitted, to the uſe of all other means of Grace: although deeply ſenſible of the vileneſs of their performances, and the total inſufficiency of all they could do to merit the pardon of one ſin, or deſerve the favour of God. They were next convinced of their Unbelief, and that Faith in Chriſt is the only condition of Juſtification. They continued thus waiting upon the Lord, till he ſpoke peace to their ſouls. This he uſually did in one moment, in a clear and ſatisfactory manner, ſo that all their griefs and anxieties vaniſhed away, and they were filled with joy and peace in believing. Some indeed have had their burdens removed, ſo that they felt no condemnation. And yet, they could not ſay, they were forgiven. But they could not be ſatisfied with this. They continued inſtant in prayer, till they knew the Lamb of God had taken away their ſins.

Moſt of theſe had been ſuddenly convinced of Sin: but with ſome it was otherwiſe. Without any ſenſe of their Guilt, they were brought to uſe the Means of Grace, by mere dint of perſuaſion: And afterwards they were brought by degrees to ſee themſelves, and their want of a Saviour. But before they found deliverance, they have had as deep a ſenſe of their helpleſs miſery as others. One in my Pariſh was a remarkable inſtance of this. He was both careleſs and profane to a great degree; and remained quite unconcerned, while many of his companions were ſorrowing after God, or rejoicing in his Love. One of his Acquaintance adviſed him to ſeek the Lord. He ſaid, "I ſee no neceſſity for it as yet. When I do, I will ſeek him as well as others." His Friend perſuaded him to try for one week, watching againſt ſin, and going by himſelf every day. He did ſo; and tho' he was quite ſtupid when he began, yet before the end of the week, he was thoroughly ſenſible of the load of ſin, and is now happy in God.

If you aſk, "How ſtands the caſe now with thoſe that have been the ſubjects of the late work?" I have the pleaſure to inform you, I have not heard of any one Apoſtate yet. It is true, many ſince their firſt joy abated, have given way to doubts and fears, have had their confidence in God much ſhaken, and have got into much heavineſs. Several have paſſed through this, and are now confirmed in the ways of God. Others are in it ſtill; and chiefly thoſe over whom Satan had gained an advantage, by hurrying them into irregular warmth,

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or into expreſſions not well guarded. I have ſeen ſome of theſe in great diſtreſs, and juſt ready to caſt away hope.

I have a great deal upon my hands at preſent, and have little time either to write or read. The difficulties and temptations of the lately converted are ſo many and various, that I am obliged to be in as many places as I can: For now is the critical hour. A man of Zeal, tho' with little Knowledge or Experience, may be an inſtrument of converting Souls. But after they are converted, he will have need of much Knowledge, much Prudence and Experience, to provide proper Food or Phyſic for the ſeveral Members, according to their State, Habit, and Conſtitution. This at preſent ſeems in a great meaſure to devolve upon *me*. And tho' I have been twenty years in the Lord's ſervice, yet I find I am quite unequal to the taſk. However, I will do what I can; and may the Lord bleſs my endeavours!

The enemy is buſy night and day, in ſowing the tares of Diviſion among the Wheat. And in ſome places he has prevailed ſo far as to plunge ſome of them in the water. In other places little feuds and animoſities ariſe, to grieve the Preachers and damp the ſpirits of the people. On theſe occaſions, they commonly apply to *me*; and all is well, at leaſt for a ſeaſon.——When I conſider, What it is to watch over ſouls, and how much labour and pains it implies, to diſcharge it in any degree, I cannot but cry out with the Apoſtle, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?*

However, upon the whole, things are in as flouriſhing a condition, as can reaſonably be expected, conſidering what great numbers, of various capacities and ſtations have been lately added to the Societies.

But after all, a great part of *Virginia* is ſtill in a very dark and deplorable condition. This Province contains ſixty-two Counties; and the late work has reached only ſeven or eight of them. Nor has it been univerſal even in theſe, but chiefly in the Circuit, which is regularly viſited by the Preachers. In this alone very many hundreds have in a few months been added to the Lord. And ſome are adding ſtill. May He continue to pour out his Spirit upon us, and increaſe the number of the faithful every day!

Our higheſt Gratitude is due to our gracious God; for he hath done marvellous things! In a ſhort time he hath wrought a great work: And let who will ſpeak againſt it, it is evident beyond all contradiction, that many open and profligate ſinners of all ſorts, have been effectually and laſtingly changed into pious, uniform Chriſtians. So that every thinking man muſt allow, that God hath been with us of a truth, and that his *glory dwells in our Land.*

I am,

Your ſincere Friend,

and Brother in Chriſt,

DEVEREUX JARRATT.

Sep. 10. 1776.

[To Mr. *Thomas Rankin.*]

To

To the Rev. Mr. WESLEY.

June 24. 1778.

Rev. and dear Sir,

You have the Narrative of the Rev. Mr. *Jarratt*, I ſend this as a Supplement to it.

AT our little Conference held in *Philadelphia*, May, 1775, Mr. *Shadford* was appointed Aſſiſtant for *Brunſwick* Circuit in *Virginia*. He found there about Eight hundred joined together, but in a very confuſed manner. Many of them did not underſtand the nature of meeting in Claſs; and many of the Claſſes had no Leader. He reſolved to begin in good earneſt, and the Preachers with him were like-minded. Their conſtant cuſtom was, as ſoon as Preaching was over, to ſpeak to all the members of the Society, one by one. If the Society was large, one Preacher ſpoke to a part, and he that came next, to the reſt. By this means they learned more of our Doctrine and Diſcipline in a year, than in double the time before. The fruit ſoon appeared: the Congregations ſwiftly increaſed, and many were pricked to the heart. Many that were a little affected, deſired to ſee the nature of meeting in

Claſs: and while one was ſpeaking either to thoſe that were groaning for redemption, or thoſe who had found peace with God, theſe were frequently cut to the heart, and ſometimes enabled on the ſpot to praiſe a pardoning God. Nay, ſometimes four, five, or ſix found peace with God, before the meeting was over.

The work of God thus increaſing on every ſide, more Preachers were ſoon wanting. And God raiſed up ſeveral young men, who were exceeding uſeful as Local Preachers.

After Mr. *Shadford* had been about Eight Months in the Circuit, Mr. *Jarratt* deſired, his Pariſh might be included in it: that all who choſe it might have the privilege of meeting in Claſs, and being members of the Society. He ſoon ſaw the ſalutary effects. Many that had had but ſmall deſires before, began to be much alarmed, and laboured earneſtly after eternal life. In a little time numbers were deeply awakened, and many taſted of the pardoning Love of God. In a few months Mr. *Jarratt* ſaw more fruit of his labours, than he had done for many years. And he went on with the Preachers hand in hand, both in Doctrine and Diſcipline.

When Mr. *Shadford* took an account of the Societies, before he came to the Conference in 1776, they contained two thouſand, ſix hundred, and ſixty-four perſons: to whom eighteen hundred were added in one year. Above a thouſand of theſe had found peace with God: many of whom thirſted for

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all the mind that was in Chriſt. And divers believed, God had *circumciſed their heart, to love him with all their heart, with all their ſoul.*

This Revival of Religion ſpread through fourteen Counties in *Virginia:* and thro' *Bute* and *Halliſax* Counties in *North Carolina.* At the ſame time we had a bleſſed out-pouring of the Spirit, in ſeveral Counties bordering upon *Maryland.*

Our Conference was at *Baltimore Town*, on the 22d of May. Here I received a Letter from Mr. *Jarratt*, part of which I inſert.

May 11, 1776.

" I praiſe God for his goodneſs in ſo plentifully " pouring out of his Spirit, on men, women, and " children. I believe threeſcore in and near my " Pariſh, have believed through Grace, ſince the " Quarterly Meeting. Such a Work I never ſaw " with my eyes. Sometimes Twelve, ſometimes " Fifteen find the Lord at one Claſs-meeting. I am " juſt returned from meeting two Claſſes. Much " of the power of God was in each.——My dear " Partner is now happy in God her Saviour. I " clap my hands exulting, and praiſe God. Bleſſed " be the Lord, that ever he ſent you and your Bre- " thren into this part of his vineyard! Many " Children, from eight to twelve years old, are now " under ſtrong conviction. And ſome of them are " ſavingly converted to God. I was much com- " forted this morning at the *White-Oak* Chapel. " The people there are of a truly teachable Spirit:

" thoſe particularly, who profeſs to have obtained
" the pure Love of God. They are as little chil-
" dren. When you conſider, how the Work is
" ſpreading on every ſide, you will readily excuſe me
" from being at your conference."

Monday, June 24. I left *Leeſburg*, in company with *Wright Brickell*, (a truly devout man, who now reſts from his labours) and came to *Peterſburg* on *Saturday* the 29th, where I preached, about Three in the Afternoon, and then rode on to Mr. *Boſhea*'s, about ten miles farther. A little company was waiting for me, and God was with them of a truth.

Sunday, 30. I was comforted by the ſight of my dear Brother *Shadford*. But I was weak in body, thro' riding ſo far in extreme heat, and much exerciſed in mind: and did not know how I ſhould be able to go thro' the labour of the day. We went to the Chapel at Ten, where I had liberty of mind, and ſtrength of body beyond my expectation. After preaching I met the Society, and was more relieved, both in body and mind. At four in the Afternoon I preached again, from *I ſet before thee an open door, and none can ſhut it.* I had gone through about two thirds of my diſcourſe, and was bringing the words home to the preſent Now, when ſuch power deſcended, that hundreds fell to the ground, and the houſe ſeemed to ſhake with the preſence of God. The Chapel was full of White and Black, and many were without that could not get in. Look wherever we would, we ſaw nothing but ſtreaming eyes, and

faces

faces bathed in tears: and heard nothing but groans and ſtrong cries after God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. My voice was drowned amidſt the groans and prayers of the congregation. I then ſat down in the pulpit; and both Mr. *Shadford* and I were ſo filled with the divine preſence, that we could only ſay, *This is none other than the houſe of God! This is the gate of heaven!* Huſbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven, wives their huſbands: Parents their children, and children their parents: Brothers their ſiſters, and ſiſters their brothers. In ſhort, thoſe who were happy in God themſelves, were for bringing all their Friends to him in their arms. This mighty effuſion of the Spirit, continued for above an hour: In which time many were awakened, ſome found peace with God, and others, his pure love. We attempted to ſpeak or ſing again and again: but no ſooner we began than our voices were drowned. It was with much difficulty that we at laſt perſuaded the people, as night drew on, to retire to their own homes.

Tueſday, July 2. I rode with Mr. *Shadford* to Mr. *Jarratt*'s; who with Mrs. *Jarratt* received us with open arms. I preached the next day, not far from his houſe, to a deeply attentive congregation. Many were much affected at the preaching; but far more at the meeting at the Society. Mr. *Jarratt* himſelf was conſtrained to praiſe God aloud, for his great Love to him and to his people.

Sunday, 7. I preached at *White's Chapel*, about twenty miles from Mr. *Jarratt*'s. I intended to preach

preach near the houſe, under the ſhade of ſome large trees. But the rain made it impracticable. The houſe was greatly crouded, and four or five hundred ſtood at the doors and windows, and liſtened with unabated attention. I preached from *Ezekiel*'s viſion of the *dry bones*. *And there was a great ſhaking*. I was obliged to ſtop again and again, and beg of the people to compoſe themſelves. But they could not: Some on their knees, and ſome on their faces, were crying mightily to God all the time I was preaching. Hundreds of Negroes were among them, with the tears ſtreaming down their black faces. The ſame power we found in meeting the Society, and many were enabled to rejoice with joy unſpeakable. In the cool of the Evening I preached out of doors, and many found an uncommon bleſſing.

Every day in the enſuing week I preached to large and attentive congregations. Indeed the weather was violently hot, and the fatigue of riding and preaching ſo often was great. But God made up all this to me, by his comfortable preſence. *Thurſday*, 11. I preached to a large congregation, at the Preaching-houſe near Mr. *Jarrat*'s. After preaching at ſeveral places on Friday and Saturday, on *Sunday*, 14. I came to Mr. *Boſkeua*'s, where I preached and met the Society. The congregation was, as before, abundantly larger than the Chapel could contain. And we had almoſt ſuch a day as fourteen days ago: only attended with a more deep and ſolemn work. What a work is God working in this

this corner of Mr. *Jarratt*'s Pariſh! It ſeemed as if all the Country, for nine or ten miles round, were ready to turn to God.

In the Evening I rode to Mr. *Smith*'s, and found a whole Family fearing and loving God. Mr. *Smith*, a ſenſible and judicious man, had been for many years a Juſtice of the Peace. By hearing the truth as it is in Jeſus, he and his wife firſt, and then all his children had attained that peace that paſſeth all underſtanding. He obſerved, "How amazing the Change was, which had been lately wrought in the place where he lived! That before the Methodiſts came into theſe parts, when he was called by his office to attend the Court, there was nothing but Drunkenneſs, Curſing, Swearing, and Fighting, moſt of the time the Court ſat: Whereas now nothing is heard but Prayer and Praiſe, and converſing about God, and the things of God."

Monday 15. I rode towards *North Carolina*. In every place the Congregations were large, and received the word with all readineſs of mind. I know not that I have ſpent ſuch a week ſince I came to *America*. I ſaw every where ſuch a ſimplicity in the people, with ſuch a vehement thirſt after the word of God, that I frequently preached and continued in prayer, till I was hardly able to ſtand. Indeed there was no getting away from them, while I was able to ſpeak one ſentence for God.

Sunday 21. I preached at *Ronoaky* Chapel to more than double of what the Houſe would contain. In general,

general, the White People were within the Chapel, and the Black People without. The windows being all open, every one could hear, and hundreds felt the word of God. Many were bathed in tears, and others rejoicing with joy unſpeakable. When the Society met, many could not refrain from praiſing God aloud. I preached to a large company in the Afternoon, and concluded the day with prayer and thankſgiving.

Tueſday 23. I croſſed the *Ronoaky* River, and preached at a Chapel in *North-Carolina*. And I preached every day to very large and deeply attentive Congregations: although not without much labour and pain, through the extreme heat of the weather.

On *Tueſday* 30, was our Quarterly Meeting. I ſcarce ever remember ſuch a ſeaſon. No Chapel or Preaching-houſe in *Virginia* would have contained one third of the Congregation. Our Friends knowing this, had contrived to ſhade with boughs of trees a ſpace that would contain two or three thouſand perſons. Under this, wholly ſcreened from the rays of the ſun, we held our general Love-feaſt. It began between Eight and Nine on Wedneſday-Morning, and continued till Noon. Many teſtified that they had *redemption in the blood of Jeſus, even the forgiveneſs of ſins.* And many were enabled to declare, that it had *cleanſed them from all ſin.* So clear, ſo full, ſo ſtrong was their teſtimony, that while ſome were ſpeaking their experience, hundreds

dreds were in tears, and others vehemently crying to God, for Pardon or Holineſs.

About Eight our Watch-night began. Mr. *Jarratt* preached an excellent Sermon: the reſt of the Preachers exhorted and prayed with divine energy. Surely, for the Work wrought on theſe two days, many will praiſe God to all eternity!

THOMAS RANKIN.

FINIS.